

CONGRATULATING COLONEL ELLIS
AS HE IS HONORED BY THE
TOBYHANNA ARMY DEPOT OF
MONROE COUNTY

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to COL Tracy L. Ellis, who has commanded the Tobyhanna Army Depot in Monroe County, Pennsylvania, from July 31, 2003 to July 20, 2006, when he will turn over command to COL Ronald Alberto.

The Tobyhanna Army Depot is the Nation's largest repair station for military communications equipment and weapons targeting systems. It employs more than 3,000 people and circulates more than \$450 million each year to the local economy.

Under Colonel Ellis' command, mission workload surged by 40 percent between 2003 and 2004 and 60 percent between 2003 and 2005. The depot effectively incorporated hundreds of new employees to meet the expanded workload.

The depot also expanded maintenance support of other critical systems including aircraft survivability equipment, aircrew survival radios, secure communications equipment, air defense and air traffic control, landing systems and tactical satellite communications systems.

Tobyhanna Army Depot effectively prepared for the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process, and will gain new missions from two other installations as a result.

During his command tour, Colonel Ellis added to Tobyhanna's environmental stewardship, winning the Secretary of the Army Environmental Quality Award in both 2004 and 2005. The 2005 award recognized the depot for pollution prevention in the industrial installation category for recycling more than 40 percent of the solid waste generated annually.

The depot's special employment programs earned further recognition with receipt of the 2003 Army Disability Program of the Year Award.

Colonel Ellis also directed that the depot's Army Community Services program allot its limited resources to provide maximum assistance to the large National Guard and Reserve population surrounding the installation. ACS has conducted many briefings for hundreds of families of military personnel before, during and after their deployments.

Colonel Ellis' command of Tobyhanna Army Depot is one marked by rapid increases in maintenance production, growth of depot employees, innovation and improvement in business and production management and sustained performance in environmental stewardship.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Colonel Ellis on a job well done. His devotion to duty and country as well as his commitment to excellence have bolstered the already superb reputation of the Tobyhanna Army Depot as an indispensable resource for the American Armed Forces, and insured that the depot will remain a key element in the region's economic well-being.

THE BOOMERS HAVE ARRIVED—
JIM GHIEMMETTI TURNING 60

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday night I will join the many friends of Jim Ghielmetti in celebrating an event that millions of Americans will share over the coming years. The baby boomers are turning 60, and there is nothing they can do about it. Jim's birthday is May 15th, but I think his wonderful wife Laurie wanted to give him a few months to adjust before he faced his many friends who will gather in San Francisco to wish him well. I share a May birthday but a year earlier so I had the pleasure of being ahead of Jim and the boomers.

It has now been almost 30 years since I was introduced to a young builder in my congressional district. Sid Lippow, our mutual friend who introduced us, said that he thought it was important for us to get to know one another. He said that we could give balance to each other and that we were the future of our professions, me in politics and Jim in homebuilding. But as Sid said, Jim was about building more than homes, he was building communities.

For these 30 years we have indeed added balance to one another. Most of the time after long debates over a wide range of issues, from endangered species, the future of Social Security, community planning, the right level of taxation, and so many other topics. We have argued about them in one another's homes, in restaurants and at the kids' soccer games. Through it all we have remained the best of friends.

Jim Ghielmetti has come a long way since those early days when he was learning his profession while working for Shapell Industries of Northern California. In 1983 he struck out on his own and founded Signature Properties. Today, under his leadership, the company has built more than 6,000 homes, with another 3,500 homes currently in the planning or design phases. Signature is well known throughout the greater Bay Area and Sacramento regions for its diverse product offerings in both urban and suburban settings, its commercial and mixed-use projects and its master-planned communities.

True to my first introduction to Jim, he was building more than houses. He has given an extraordinary amount of his time to making the Bay Area a better community. Since 1994, Jim Ghielmetti has focused on local transportation issues by chairing the Transportation Committee of the Tri-Valley Business Council. The Transportation Committee addresses such issues as toll roads, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) expansion to the Tri-Valley area and obtaining matching federal funds for expansion of Interstates 580 and 680.

For the last 5 years, Jim has served on the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Council. The Bay Area Council is an organization that aggressively addresses the challenges that affect the economic well-being and quality of life in the nine Bay Area counties. He also serves on the Executive Committee of the Policy Advisory Board for the Fisher Center for Real Estate and Urban Economics at the University of California, Berkeley. In 2000, Jim served on

the Governor's Commission for the 21st Century, a group charged with developing a blueprint for California to follow in addressing transportation, housing, environmental and other issues of the 21st century. In 2003, Jim was appointed to the California State Transportation Commission.

Jim Ghielmetti has been an outstanding citizen participant in the public policy debates in our region and in our State.

Homebuilding is what Jim Ghielmetti does, but his family tells us who he is. Jim and his wife Laurie, a very successful businesswoman in the design field, have been partners in life and in business. They have raised two great sons, Michael and Brian, and recently a grandson Matteo. Michael, specializing in creative urban infill, is working with Jim at Signature Properties, and Brian is in New York doing urban renovations. Jim and Laurie and all of us are very proud of them both.

These are just some of the reasons why so many of Jim's friends will be coming together to wish him a very happy birthday with so many more to come. This birthday may be a shock to Jim, but I can assure him that all of us are very glad that he has had these 60 years and wish him many more to come.

THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT REAUTHORIZATION AND AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2006

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a sponsor of H.R. 9, "The Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006." This legislation compliments the historic Voting Rights Act of 1965, which is considered to be among the greatest legislative accomplishments in our nation's history. Often referred to as the "Crown Jewel" of America's civil rights laws, the Act memorializes those who marched, struggled and even died to secure the right for all Americans to vote.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 passed just months after the historic Selma to Montgomery march and remains a lasting achievement of the Civil Rights movement. It helped to change the face of Southern politics in ways we could hardly imagine. In Alabama, in the space of only one year after the Act became law, black voter registration practically doubled from 116,000 in August 1965 to 228,000 in August, 1966. By 1990, there were more than 7,300 black elected officials nationwide, including the governor of Virginia. The Act produced black Members of Congress from Alabama, Florida and North Carolina for the first time since Reconstruction. Rural black voters in Georgia and Louisiana sent black representatives to Congress as well.

One of the more meaningful provisions of the Act called for the placement of federal referees and monitors in counties with a clear practice of disenfranchisement. There were and still are subtle tools to discourage blacks, other minorities and poor people from voting. Local political establishments still use many of the same tactics: annexation ineligibility; purging voter lists; relocating polling places; the

use of official government issued voter-ID cards and raising residency requirements. These are some of the discriminating practices that undermine the impact of black and other minority voters in particular.

As the Ranking Member of the Committee on House Administration which oversees Federal elections, I applaud the substantial progress that has been made in the area of voting rights through the 1965 Voting Rights Act. However, I also know that we must continue our efforts to protect the rights of every American Voter. This can be achieved through the reauthorization and restoration of the expiring provisions of this vital law.

Chief among the expiring provisions is Section 5, which requires that any change to voting rules in covered jurisdictions be submitted to either the United States Department of Justice or the United States District Court for the District of Columbia for "preclearance" before it can take effect. Through Section 5, the Voting Rights Act has prevented thousands of discriminatory voting changes from undermining minority voters' access to the ballot.

H.R. 9 will also extend Section 203, the language minority protection of the Act. This provision requires jurisdictions that fall under the purview of the law to make all election information that is available in English available in the local minority language. Thus, all citizens will have a fundamental right and opportunity to register, learn the details of the elections and cast a free vote. During hearings, House Members received substantial evidence from advocacy groups and the Department of Justice that language minorities remain the victims of discrimination in voting.

There is no more fundamental right than the right to vote. For nearly a century many Americans were denied this fundamental right of citizenship. We must continue our efforts to protect the rights of every American voter with the reauthorization and restoration of the expiring provisions of the Act. H.R. 9 will renew and strengthen the Voting Rights Act for another twenty-five years.

A vote for this important legislation will send a resounding positive message to the next generation and generations of Americans to come. I urge its passage.

THE RESTORATION, PRESERVATION AND RENEWAL OF THE "CHARLES W. MORGAN"

HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to today to talk about the *Charles W. Morgan*—built in 1841 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966—she is the only surviving wooden, square-rigged commercial vessel still remaining from the Nation's great age of sail. The *Morgan* is a treasured symbol of America and Connecticut, and the cornerstone of Mystic Seaport's collection. The *Morgan* is an icon of an industry that fueled the early American economy.

After her whaling days ended in 1921, the *Morgan* was preserved and exhibited in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts, until 1941 when she came to Mystic Seaport. Today, the *Charles W. Morgan* dominates the Museum's

waterfront. Preserved afloat in her natural element, much as she appeared during her active whaling career, the *Morgan* is a featured part of the Mystic Seaport visitor experience. Through the years millions of visitors have climbed onboard the *Morgan* to experience, first-hand, the living and working environment of a large 19th-century wooden whaling vessel.

On Saturday, July 15, I will visit Mystic Seaport to help celebrate the restoration, preservation and renewal of the *Charles W. Morgan*. A program of restoration and preservation on the *Morgan* began in 1968 and continues to the present day. The *Charles W. Morgan's* past restoration at the Henry B. duPont Preservation Shipyard at Mystic Seaport helped define the standards of maritime preservation and historic vessel documentation as practiced today, worldwide. This preservation work has been recognized with numerous accolades, including the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's National Historic Preservation Award in 1992 and the World Ship Trust Millennium International Maritime Heritage Award in 2000. The *Morgan* was also included on the Connecticut Freedom Trail in 1997.

Substantial restoration work is underway to ensure the *Morgan's* survival as an authentic 19th-century wooden vessel. The next phase of the *Morgan's* restoration will focus on an eight-foot band around the vessel's waterline. Mystic Seaport estimates that this 2½ year project will address the *Charles W. Morgan's* major structural needs for the next 20 years.

As my colleagues from Mississippi and gulf coast region may be aware, Mystic Seaport's Preservation Shipyard and the *Charles W. Morgan* have made national headlines recently due to the Museum's efforts to salvage live oak from the devastated Gulf Coast region. Residents of four coastal Mississippi cities can take some comfort from knowing that centuries-old trees uprooted during the storm will be used to restore the *Morgan's* frame, backbone, and stem and stem posts. By helping to keep the *Morgan* "alive" for future generations, these extraordinary trees will continue to touch the minds and hearts of Museum visitors, perhaps for centuries to come.

As many of you may know, Mystic Seaport—the Museum of America and the Sea is a leading national center for maritime research and education, with over 18,500 members and 1,500 volunteers. On average 300,000 people visit Mystic Seaport each year, and over 1.4 million more access the Museum's resources electronically via the Web site, www.mysticseaport.org. The Museum is the nation's fourth largest history museum and is considered to be one of the finest maritime museums in the world. Seventeen waterfront acres are devoted to floating exhibits, exhibition galleries, demonstrations, and educational programming. The Museum's facilities include a 19th century New England coastal village, a new 41,000 square-foot Collections Research Center, a 70,000-volume research library, a planetarium, four national historic landmark vessels, and a working preservation shipyard.

The *Charles W. Morgan* is being restored "famously" at Mystic Seaport's preservation shipyard, and I am honored to help Mystic Seaport celebrate the restoration and preservation of *Charles W. Morgan*, now in its 3rd century under sail.

RAIL SECURITY

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, Madrid, London, Mumbai. Everywhere in the world, people are aware of the threats that terrorism poses to mass transit systems. Everywhere, it seems, except for the United States.

Everyday 11.3 million Americans use passenger rail and mass transit. Our Nation depends on these networks to get us to work, to school, to the doctor, to back home. The networks are open and far reaching and, like other mass transit systems around the world, exceedingly vulnerable to terrorist attack.

Despite these facts, and the evidence of recent history, the Department of Homeland Security's transportation initiatives have been almost solely focused on aviation, ignoring all other modes of transportation.

The President's budget request for fiscal year 2007 only allocated \$37.2 million in the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) budget for non-aviation transportation security—less than 1 percent of the TSA budget.

In addition, between fiscal years 2003 through 2006, the Department of Homeland Security has only distributed about \$387 million for rail and mass transit security grants.

These resources are not nearly enough to address the security vulnerabilities in the rail and mass transit networks.

I, along with my Democratic colleagues, have been urging the Republican majority and the administration to focus on the threats to rail and mass transit for years, but no real progress has been made.

This is very similar to the years that we spent urging action on Port Security, but nothing was done until the Dubai Ports business deal came to light.

Unfortunately on the rail and mass transit front we have had plenty of warnings about security vulnerabilities.

We have seen the tragic and horrifying attacks on rail and mass transit systems in Madrid, London, and now Mumbai, and yet the administration and the Republican leadership still have not taken any steps to secure our Nation's rail and mass transit systems.

What are we waiting for? A suicide bomber on the subway system in New York? A dirty bomb on the DC Metro? Shouldn't we make rail and mass transit security a priority before we get attacked?

Next week the Committee on Homeland Security will consider an authorization bill for the Department of Homeland Security, and I urge my Republican colleagues to support the strong rail and mass transit security provisions and adequate funding levels that Homeland Security Democrats will be offering to the bill.

We need to require the Department of Homeland Security to develop a thorough national rail and public transportation plan to clarify the Federal, State, and local roles and responsibilities in security these systems.

An emphasis must be placed on strengthening intelligence sharing, public outreach and education initiatives, and how to resume operations after an attack.

We also must require the development of area rail and public transportation plans to